



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 5D

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 5D
371 Morse St. NE
Washington, DC 20002

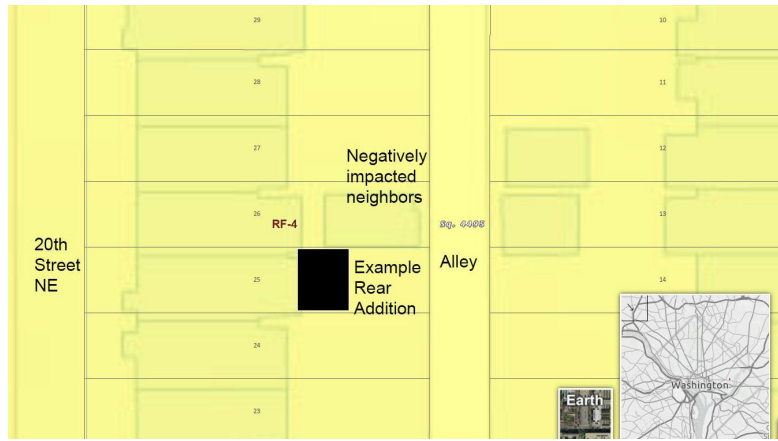
May 13, 2022

RE: BZA 20680

ANC 5D stands by its original objection to BZA 20680. Although, the developer has made cosmetic adjustments to the original plan as suggested by the BZA, they have failed to address the core concerns registered by ANC 5D:

1. Per §5201.3, ANC 5D is concerned that the requested exception would have a substantially adverse effect on the use or enjoyment of the abutting dwelling at 803 20th St. NE. Even after the removal of approximately 1 foot of the requested extension, this project continues to negatively impact the light and air available to the neighboring property and unduly affect the use and enjoyment of a senior citizen's home. Ms. Hill is a retired person who is home throughout the day and the loss of sunlight and air during the hours shown in the sun study presented by the developer would substantially decrease the enjoyment of her home. The developer also circulated a petition in which incomplete information was given to neighbors. The developer gained zero signatures from the neighbors that would actually be impacted by the decision on 20th St. NE. In particular, the adjacent property owner (who shares a chimney with 801) has not signed off on a plan for the vertical extension of the property which makes the likelihood of the development moving forward as presented to the BZA extremely unlikely.
2. In addition, the added extension is likely to set a precedent that would negatively impact rear setbacks on the remainder of this block and set an adverse precedent for the budding RF-4 designation. Although the developer makes a case that such a domino effect is unlikely to occur due to lot occupancy constraints, the argument fails to incorporate the consideration of accessory buildings like garages which currently sit on the alley and the growing trend of lot consolidation as elderly neighbors pass down their properties to a single owner for multiple adjacent properties which greatly increases the chances of by-right construction that decreases the livability for neighbors (See Illustration A below).

Illustration A



3. ANC 5D is concerned that the BZA is choosing to offer a special exception to an RF-4 zone which has yet to be established. ANC 5D sincerely hopes that the Zoning Commission will stand by its previous decision to approve the new zone and uphold the rules governing development in our community so that residents can have confidence in the integrity of the commission's decisions. For the zoning commission to reverse course at this juncture, when not even one building has been constructed under the new RF-4 guidelines, undermines the reliability of the commission's dealings with community members, immediately undermines the integrity of the RF-4 zone and sets a precedent that will encourage other communities to rely on historic preservation rather than zoning to address community concerns regarding development. ZC 19-30 was a very well-publicized case and communities across the district as well as housing advocates are closely watching the real-world outcomes of that case on our community to learn more about available solutions to balance the exact concerns that our community expressed regarding the creation of affordable housing while still making sure that communities are not only livable, but enjoyable for long-term residents.

The RF-4 zone is the newest mapped zone in the city. The Carver/Langston neighborhood includes the city's only mapped RF-4 zone since approval in 2020. In that time, not one building has ever been built matching the RF-4 zoning criteria. This would be the first building built under the new zoning and permitting a special exception to a zone that has never been enforced undermines the Zoning Commission's prior decision in ZC 19-30 and the community's faith in our local government. The Carver/Langston community worked in good faith with a variety of District agencies to reach a compromise to best serve all residents as we charted a way forward. It is the sincere hope of ANC 5D that the Zoning Commission will honor their previous decision and allow the new RF-4 zoning to be implemented as originally intended before offering special exceptions to create a balanced, gradual approach to the development in our community that honors the rights of all neighbors.

Respectfully,

Comm. A. Sydelle Moore
Chairperson, ANC 5D